

## CAUCUS OF CONVENERS

### MEETING SUMMARY

**Wednesday, October 6, 2010**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Video Conference (local DVR sites)**

#### Welcome/Introductions/Goals for this Meeting

#### Review Agenda (Anne Rodgers-Rhyme)

- Emphasize that this Caucus is a chance to develop a strong peer learning network

#### Introductions and descriptions of industry partnerships (by conference site)

- Madison--DWD
  - Connie Loden (Heart of WI), North Central—Alternative Energy Sector; Green Sector (currently convening but will be submitting training grant application); IT Sector
- Madison—WDB-South Central WI
  - Pat Schramm, Seth and Erin—New Ag convening grant; construction and energy weatherization front; healthcare; manufacturing
  - Going to build on work inherited from WIRED
- Lakeshore Tech College—Bay Area WDB
  - Ann Franz—Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance; writing grant for new marine manufacturing alliance (North Coast Marine Manufacturing Alliance)
- Mid-State Tech College—North Central WDB
  - Jennifer Riegenbach and Dave Colby—Currently convening Manufacturing and IT Occupational cluster (partnering with Mid-State)
- Milwaukee—WOW, MAWIB, Southeast
  - WOW (Staci Eggert Dzeidzic, Michelle St. Clair, Angie Cummings)—forming new partnership for manufacturing (kick-off Oct. 25); currently have Power Controls partnership (Manufacturing in power controls)
  - MAWIB (Jeff McAllister, Paula Kenenakhone)—water sector convening, healthcare training (4 programs: School-at-Work, ABN to BSN, Personal Care Workers, Community Healthcare Workers); training grant with W RTP to green up the trades
  - SE (Susan Koehn)—partners on many of the grants mentioned by WOW and MAWIB
- Eau Claire—Northwest WDB
  - Renee Surdick (UW-Stout)—Advanced Manufacturing Implementation grant; also working with a group on powerplants, transportation, and construction on the Mississippi region, looking for a partner in Maritime
- Racine—Southeast WDB
  - John Milisauskas (Kenosha Job Center)—convening grant for Define and Align Green (decided after convening not to go further with training); also part of MAWIB personal care worker training.
- Wausau—North Central WDB
  - Doris McAllister—Advanced Manufacturing and Transportation Supportive Workforce convening grants have now moved into training grants; Green Sector STEM and IT are moving forward; recently submitted healthcare grant
- La Crosse—Western WDB
  - Beth Sullivan and Patti Balacek —convening grants for metal manufacturers (now establishing own 501(c)3); training grants for LEAN manufacturing; training grant for Food, Resource, and Ag Network; training grant for Healthcare; convening grant for Bio-composites and Plastics; convening grant for Energy Industry; next focus in green construction for energy efficiency.

## Planning Session

### Convener Network (Laura Dresser)

- A lot of folks in WI are doing a lot of great work but conveners do not have a convening-specific forum to address common issues or receive peer support.
  - Mentoring, sharing training guides or curriculum, and collaboration could help us from having to “reinvent the wheel” when new industry partnerships are formed.
  - Share best practices
  - A two-way street to help inform policy—think about how policy issues are playing out in the field so the state can hear about what is working and what is not.
- Request permission to gather contact information from conveners to create a directory that will be shared among the Caucus participants
  - Group agreed with request
  - COWS (Laura D. and Sig P.) and DWD (Anne R-R. and Rachel W.) will follow up with a request for information

*Question: What are some key insights that you have learned or been thinking about?*

- In working with manufactures, you need an item of interest to bring employers to the table. Example: The issue of disposing shrink wrap brought the Food and Ag businesses to the table for Western WI WDB. If Western would have only focused on training and not an issue that was pressing to the employers, they would have lost their participation.
- One-on-one relationship building
- Personal contact—we have to get OUT and talk to employers, not just invite them. This is especially necessary if the businesses in the sector have historically not gotten along.
- When working with employers that normally compete, keep focus on the areas where everyone can work together to the benefit of all.
- Make sure the members of the IP are on the same page. Need to have one voice and one message.
- Sometimes preferences or plans change. Example: Businesses initially support on-the-job training, but eventually change to classroom training due to time/training/structural limitations.
- This effort will take time—it may take a while before you have the right people at the table and they are all on the same page. It also takes time to build trust.
- If you convene multiple IPs, you will probably have different experiences with each group. Groups have different needs and different purposes. Some may “gel” faster or more than others. Different IPs may also choose to take different routes or levels of involvement.
- Industry is the key—meetings should be mostly industry members
- Some IPs have dues, which helps with sustainability.
- Increase sustainability by attaching IP work with other organizations that can help sustain the project beyond the funding (e.g. working with a bioforward or Ag council)
- We must support the leveraging of resources.
- One of the biggest challenges is the decreasing amount of time business have to devote to IP due to the economy. Difficult to schedule meetings, especially when partners must travel.

*Question: What do you think would be the best use of a convener network of this nature?*

- Peer grouping, or at least information sharing by sector
- Sharing curriculum
- Sharing resources and expertise
- Create list of employers already involved to show potential employer partners
  - Testimonials—allow employers to talk to other employers who have had success
- Think more about how to use intermediaries (e.g. see how MAHA works)
- Share information about funding
- Form a speaker bank when sectors are looking for expertise
- Form list of websites of each Alliance
- Be able to come together and share struggles, troubleshoot

- Find what data is useful

#### Discussion and Wrap-up

- Business: next Academy Workshop was scheduled for October 20 on Employer Engagement, propose postponing it until December 8, 9, or 16
  - Group approves
  - Decide to move workshop to December 8, in Madison
- Do you like the video conferencing? Move the next one to January or February (limited to Wednesdays or Thursdays)? Thoughts on frequency of meetings?
  - Group suggests post-January 25
  - Likes video conference format
  - Suggests meeting 3 times a year (maybe once in person)
- Suggestion: make “Agree/Disagree” cards for next meeting so people can express a quick yes/no opinion without using the microphone (minimizes background noise and camera switching)

Meeting adjourned